Bible & Daily Living

Love as a positive force in drama

By WILLIAM L. TRIMYER

Love as a Positive Force
Lesson for November 29, 1981
Bible Study Passage: 1 John 4:7-21

Introduction

Love is a powerful force in the human drama. It overpowers all the negative forces that would destroy human relationships and communities. On a human level, "Love is a relationship that involves mutual experiences in the lives of people who deeply care about the welfare of each other, a relationship in which both are important persons....who have something to share with each other, and who are in a way emotionally indispensable to each other. And what does that mean? It means that to fully love, one must expose oneself to such openness toward the other that one becomes highly vulnerable to being hurt by the failures of the other. In a word, though, what it really says is that in order to love, one must be able to be hurt by the one who is loved." (**Colors of the Mind:** Skipworth Press, Inc., Richmond, Va., 1978, page 85)

On a divine level, love was best expressed by God's willfulness to expose himself through the Person of Jesus the Christ. Here was love manifested at its highest and most significant expression. Christ came as a dramatic expression of the Heavenly Father's love.

This week the focus of our study is upon the expressed love of God, as revealed in the Person of Christ.

Love Demonstrated [1 John 4:7-10]

Whenever we practice love toward one another, we are exhibiting a God-like quality or characteristic. Love is a great testimony of one's encounter with the living Christ. Whenever we can respond in love to particular crises or conflicts, we proclaim the love of God as a reconciling force.

This Sunday begins the Advent season in anticipation of the birth of Christ. The gift of the Savior brought into clear focus the concerned love of a God who cares for his people. The coming of Christ revealed God's supreme effort to reach out to us with redeeming, reconciling love.

Our Response to Love [1 John 4:11-12]

Love tends to breed love and hate tends to breed hate. The author of 1 John was writing to impress upon the Christians of the early church the importance of loving one another. In response to God's love we are to love one another.

Love in action testifies' and makes known the reality of God. We know God through his love for us made visible through the redeeming and reconciling work of Christ on the Cross. And unless God is like the Christ we know, we would want no part of him.

Love Experienced [1 John 4:13-21]

The author of 1 John makes a distinct point of the relationship between the indwelling Spirit and love. Whenever we acknowledge Christ as Savior and Lord, we are then "born of the Spirit."

Upon reading 1 John we note that the author was not a mere sentimentalist of sorts. The love John describes is not that which we see and experience on the Hollywood scene. John used the Greek word agape, he emphasizes that Christian love emerges always from a personal faith and relationship to Christ.

One of the payoffs of love is freedom from fear. The notion of judgment does not normally strike fear in the heart of the believer. When we identify ourselves with Christ through faith, we assure ourselves a freedom from fear of judgment and threat.

Fear can be a destructive emotion that may keep us from going after some of life's finest goals. The only way to fight fear is to adopt a stance of faith.

A natural result of love is affirmation. John makes a very significant remark when he says, "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?"

The quickest way to discern how real our love for God really is to note our response to other people. Those who say they love God yet who practice injustice are not being true to themselves or to God.

Dr. Trimyer is Chaplain at Burnham Hospital in Champaign, Illinois (WLYP).

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Church News

The Pastor Speaks

By REX BENNETT

The Deeper Meaning of Thanksgiving
Psalm 92

The writer of the 92nd Psalm begins his praise to God with the words: "It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord", and for him it was good indeed! After all, everything was going well with him; he was among the privileged who seemed to have life by the tail. It isn't difficult to talk about the healing value of thanksgiving when no healing is necessary or when life is easy or when one's pockets are full...but what of those people who do not have it so easy: the lonely, the poor, the put-upon, the sick, the "walking wounded?"

The giving of thanks to God is not simply designed for the privileged! The deeper meaning of thanksgiving is centered around two important questions: first, am I as thankful in bad times as in good times; second, is my very nature one of thanksgiving? We become so busy asking, "What have I to be thankful for?" That we forget that thanksgiving is not an audit or an inventory, but it is a fundamental attitude toward life itself. If we are truly thankful, we do not say, "O God, I thank thee for this and that," but rather, "O God, I thank thee for thyself."

1. God is our highest gift of all, and our very nature should be thankful for that! He is a living God; He is a personal God who wills, thinks, cares, loves, creates, and continuously acts within His world. And this means that He knows me, loves me, guides me, and never leaves me alone. God is always the same: yesterday, today, and forever. He never changes. He is trustworthy, fulfills His promises, and is everlasting in His forgiveness, compassion, and love.

2. Our very nature should be grateful for this God in Christ who loves, a love that is demonstrated in two ways: by His creation and by the supreme manifestation of that love in Jesus Christ as redeemer.

3. Our very nature should be thankful to God for His fatherly goodness. He loves us all; we are the "sheep of His pasture;" we are made in His image: He is as concerned for one of us as He is for all of us. There is no partiality in His goodness: "Red and yellow, black and white, they are precious in His sight."

Let us thank God for Himself. This is the fundamental attitude, and all other thanksgiving grows out of it. And we show our thanksgiving by doing what He has taught us to do, by surrendering ourselves wholly and completely to His way, by telling Him in prayer of our love for Him, and by serving those whom the Father loves.

Rex Bennett is pastor of Liberty Baptist Church in Appomattox.

Funding drive is successful

The fund drive for the building fund of Our Lady of Peace Catholic Church has met all expectations, according to Dr. A. A. Pratrick, President of the Parish Council. "The business community of Appomattox and Appomattox County have certainly responded generously to our plea," Pratrick said. "We feel we have been welcomed into the community with the first Catholic Church in Appomattox County."

Some contributions are still coming in, and others promised are expected to add to the total raised. It was emphasized that no house to house canvass had been made, but individual contributions are gratefully welcomed.

Dr. Pratrick also pointed out that the new building, when completed, will be an asset to the community and will be available to groups for meetings. "We would like to see the doors open every day, and the lights on every evening with various community activities."

Installation service set

The Springfield Baptist Church will conduct an Installation Service for their newly elected Pastor, the Rev. Harrison J. Kelso, on Sunday, November 29, at 3 p.m. to Rev. Winston R. Jones was to officiate this service, but at this writing, he remains a patient in Virginia Baptist Hospital. Let us remember the Rev. Jones in our prayers, and continue to pray for one another.

We extend to all of you wishes for a Happy Thanksgiving Day.

Every day is a day of Thanksgiving, but it is good to have a special day when we all join in joyously giving thanks to God.

Why do we need to take time to give thanks? Because Thanksgiving is an extremely important part of a rich life. It is a part of healing, a part of prosperity, a part of our growth.

Thanksgiving is a part of all that is good in our experience.

Rejoice always, pray constantly, give thanks in all circumstances. 1 Thess. 5:16-18.

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Home of the Week

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A large family will thoroughly enjoy the plan, as it is designed with a good traffic pattern and four full sized bedrooms in only 2,420 square feet.

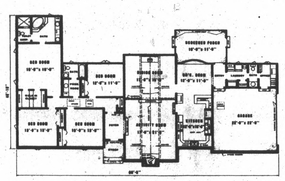
The foyer will direct you to a large family area or private bedroom wing. The family area boasts a cathedral peak room with vaulted ceiling, stone fireplace and a view to the enormous formal dining room, through an open full. A sink is shown in the dining room and this room will serve beautifully as a buffet.

You step up from the great room to the kitchen-breakfast room area. The kitchen is enormous and features built-in appliances, pantry, desk, mixer appointments, and a view to the front as well as the back of the house, through the bow window shown in the breakfast area. The breakfast room is sized well for large family eating. Entrance to the screened porch and double side entry garage is from the rear hall. The laundry, half bath and the "mud" entrance from the office side has garage access.

The four bedrooms are all sufficiently large. Three of the bedrooms are serviced by a central bath. A luxury compartment bath, and a large walk-in closet are provided for the master bedroom. An attic fan and disappearing stair is shown from the bedroom wing hall.

The contemporary exterior includes a stone chimney, vertical siding, glass in the gable end, and diamond-lite windows.

This plan is available with Slab or Basement foundations. It includes 2,420 square feet of heated area. AB W. D. Farmer plans include special construction details for energy efficiency and are guaranteed to meet F.H.A. and V.A. requirements. For further information on plan 3644, write W. D. Farmer Residence Designer, Inc., P.O. Box 49463, Atlanta, Ga. 30359.



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